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## THE LOGICAL PLACE TO TAKE A PICTURE: WILLIAM GEDNEY IN BETHLEHEM

*Edward Slavishak*

**Abstract:** This article uses the photographer William Gedney's visit to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1975 to consider three aspects of urban touring. First, Gedney's appreciation of Bethlehem's aesthetics derived from his adoration of Walker Evans's well-known 1935 photo from Bethlehem. Gedney mimicked Evans's moves forty years later, much like fringe tourists interested in urban decay in the twenty-first century study each other's images to establish valuable sites and styles. Second, Gedney's visit remained largely disconnected from the variety of economic and demographic change that occurred locally in the sixties and seventies. His focus on surfaces in his photography was echoed by his surface contact with the city itself. Finally, I argue that his photographs should be interpreted in relation to his previous work in the United States and India. Gedney's trip provides an opportunity to rework narratives of urban decline in the twentieth century.

**Keywords:** Photography, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, William Gedney, Walker Evans, tourism

*I*t was an unlucky start. William Gedney had been walking around Bethlehem for several hours with camera in hand. He had snapped dozens of pictures on that warm Sunday afternoon,

until it was time to break for dinner. It was only then that he realized his mistake. The New York-based photographer explained in his field-journal entry from September 29, 1975: "Discover the Leica I am using is out of focus . . . probably many of the pictures if not all will be out of focus. A whole afternoon's work down the drain." For a deliberate artist like Gedney, with two decades' experience in photography and an affinity for the technical side of his medium, the misstep is surprising. At the same time, the error was of a piece with the rest of the haphazard visit to Bethlehem. Gedney stopped in the city on his way from New York to San Francisco and wrangled a room at the YMCA. He became queasy after eating canned gravy at a local diner and got lost several times during the day. It was a forty-eight-hour detour on a trip that had grand ambitions: he would lay the foundation for a photographic study of American life. Bethlehem was a low-key trial run; it was better to be blurry there than in the Bay Area.<sup>1</sup>

For Gedney, Bethlehem was part work and part play—*work* because he was figuring out what types of urban forms he should emphasize in his new images, and *play* because it was a chance to mimic one of his professional idols. The venerated photographer Walker Evans had wandered the streets of Bethlehem forty years before, and it was there that he produced one of the iconic images of the twentieth century. Gedney was a devotee of Evans and likely decided to spend two nights in Bethlehem because of the city's role in his hero's career. As he moved around the town by day and by night, Gedney was rarely more than a few blocks from the cemetery scene that Evans had made famous in photography circles. The streets of the town bristled with a sense of the master's presence. Gedney was intensely conscious of walking in Evans's footsteps. He might not have thought of himself as a tourist, but he viewed Bethlehem through the lens of the celebrated image, just as many tourists experience a site only after wading through promotional materials. When he stood on the spot itself, Gedney described it as "the logical place to take a picture."

I take that description seriously and use that spot on the southern edge of Bethlehem to consider photography's ability to conjure a sense of place for historians. I examine three relationships that converged for Gedney: his interpretation of Evans's Depression-era photography; the fit of his Bethlehem work among his previous projects; and the changes that had occurred in a city that was getting further and further from its heyday. In training my lens on these contexts, I situate five of Gedney's images from those two days. His out-of-focus Leica can be used as a metaphor for the limits that he encountered when he tried to span the decades to recreate the

place from Evans's photograph. He could see only so much. It also represents the challenge for historians in using street photography to think about urban history. The image of city life connotes movement, yet Gedney's pictures were essentially still-lives of the street. His photo tour—short, meandering, and somewhat clumsy—might seem like little more than a hiccup in the career of a photographer who received more attention posthumously than while living. Looking closely at the collision of photographer and city, however, can illuminate the fleeting moments in which an outsider tried to get on the inside of the city. Before there were “fringe tourists” and connoisseurs of “rust-belt chic,” there were people like Bill Gedney.

A city boy by heart, Gedney loved what he saw in Bethlehem. His images and explanations of them suggest a different take on urban history's twentieth-century declension models—at least when considering cities as sites of meaning. As historians have demonstrated, the era during which Gedney visited Bethlehem was a time of emergency for both industrial cities and the residents of working-class neighborhoods like the one in which Gedney spent his time. Jon Teaforde notes the “morbid tone” with which many analysts in the mid-1970s described urban prospects. Demographic statistics, commercial de-investment, and a pervading sense of dereliction marked American cities at this time as grim shadows of their past glory. On the other hand, several recent works have shown that a “rise and fall” narrative overstates the glory of the glory days and oversimplifies the postwar changes as an inevitable, monolithic collapse. I affirm Alison Isenberg's take on city spaces as being constantly reworked during the twentieth century. Gedney's appreciation of Bethlehem was part of a larger movement toward aestheticizing elements of the urban milieu that would otherwise be categorized as “blight.” It might not have heartened the residents of Bethlehem to learn of his appreciation for the grim and the grimy, but his visit was a subtle example of a shift in perceptions. His ability to find value in the mundane and shabby put him in the vanguard of a style of touring that became much more prevalent by century's end.<sup>2</sup>

## Evans and Gedney

Looking back from 1975, it seemed like the photograph kept appearing in the late 1930s: a dense, crowded view of a cemetery in Bethlehem with a cluster of rowhouses sitting behind it and the stacks of a steel works behind

them. Or perhaps it was a view of the steel works itself, with the houses and gravestones running interference (see fig. 1). Walker Evans produced the image in late 1935 while working for the Department of Agriculture's Resettlement Administration (RA). It appeared in his book *American Photographs* in 1938. The poet Archibald MacLeish used the image in the same year as one of many illustrations in his book-length poem *Land of the Free*. The picture helped MacLeish drive home his themes of uncertainty and disillusionment. Then the photo appeared as an 8×10 spread across two pages of the *US Camera Annual* 1939. It was the last of forty-one images reproduced in the book, and it was editor Edward Steichen's favorite. RA head Roy Stryker projected the image when he gave a lecture to the American Historical Association in December 1939. Stryker noted that the picture



FIGURE 1: Walker Evans, "Bethlehem Graveyard and Steel Mill. Pennsylvania." 1935. From Library of Congress, Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1998018003/PP/> (accessed June 2014).

epitomized how photography could be used by historians to document and interpret the past. By this he meant the indexical quality of documentary images, their ability to form a “pure record” of the nation.<sup>3</sup>

Evans’s 1935 photograph became iconic in the United States and was widely interpreted as a comment on the crushing, industrial everyday of the Great Depression. Evans developed a viewpoint in the early 1930s that a biographer calls an “anonymous” style. He shot street scenes directly, with an eye toward baldly presenting the conditions of the moment. But he was less interested in displaying the present state of the nation for his contemporaries than in portraying the *past* for future generations. The anonymity of his style came through a focus on small moments and obscure scenes. This ephemera, he reasoned, would speak to viewers much later, when the world they represented had passed. A large part of the images’ meanings, then, concerned their ability to evoke what the anthropologist Cornelius Holtorf calls “pastness.” Pastness is the perception that an object in the present is a holdover from the world as it was at some distant time in the past. Unlike calculating the age of an object or verifying its authenticity, considering pastness focuses on the expectations of the viewer and whether the given object meets those expectations through such visual cues as decay and patina. Evans was an eager student of both. The emotional distance that he tried to maintain in his work created what fellow RA photographer Dorothea Lange called a “bitter edge.”<sup>4</sup>

The edge came through in the Bethlehem photo as a matter-of-fact comment on the claustrophobia of a steel town. Employment was a relative luxury in the 1930s, but Evans’s composition managed to transform the mill that provided much-needed wages into a lurking specter. In Bethlehem the mill was part of the daily scene. A Bethlehem resident might not consciously stare at the steel works, and Evans matched locals’ sense of steel forming the background to everything. Beyond the fact that Evans’s image seemed to inventory the manmade environment, there was another prevailing lesson that observers took from it in the subsequent decades. The art historian Leslie Baier wrote that Evans “transformed peripheral awareness into deliberate, frontal observation.” Life in steel towns like Bethlehem became comprehensible to nonresidents through such photographs. People rarely appeared in Evans’s images of Pennsylvania industrial towns, so the emptied streets and cramped organization of the scenes spoke of lives being led in and around mills. Decades later, they still spoke.<sup>5</sup>

Gedney was one of the many who listened. Born twenty-nine years after Evans, Gedney came from upstate New York and, in the late 1950s, started

a rambling career as a graphic designer, commercial photographer, and then an independent photographer. Evans's work in Bethlehem was the type of imagery that Gedney wanted to pursue. He appreciated Evans's knack for keeping his emotions well concealed. The pictures stood on their own and allowed the viewer to figure out a spectrum of appropriate responses. Gedney scribbled a quote from the philosophical writer Eric Hoffer's journal in 1969 that reminded him of Evans: "to be civilized is perhaps to rise above passion; to be able to observe and report without giving way to anger or enthusiasm." Gedney filled his journals with statements by and about Evans and his collaborator James Agee. Many of the passages referred to the quest to get at subject matter dispassionately. If it was a bitter edge that Evans fostered, then it was not for the sake of being contrary. Gedney, like Evans before him, thought that life in the United States was already contrary enough.<sup>6</sup>

Gedney made a name for himself in the 1960s by shooting in the desperate places of the world. In addition to choosing the most ordinary views and shooting them with an air of detachment, Gedney also shared with Evans a travel record. Both men developed their skills on the streets of New York, and both traveled to the rural South to apply their approach to nonurban subjects. In July 1964, in his first major project, Gedney spent a month in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, living with the families of two unemployed coal miners. Gedney, who was thirty-one at the time, used dozens of rolls of film as he observed his subjects biding their time. Unlike the majority of his work after the sixties, his Kentucky pictures featured people in their home environments and used the physical scene as the backdrop to their action or inaction. His Kentucky series advanced his career in the New York art world. Without the stamp of mountain poverty to give his portfolio a topical focus (at a time when poverty in the Appalachian Mountains was a hot commodity), it is hard to imagine him receiving a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1966 or a Fulbright in 1969. When Gedney applied for the Guggenheim, he described the Kentucky work as a series on "the human being in conflict with his environment." He returned to Kentucky after eight years away, to follow up on the people with whom he felt a genuine bond. Even if his images managed to exude detachment, Gedney could relate closely to his subjects.<sup>7</sup>

By the time of his return to Kentucky in 1972, Gedney's career had taken him across the nation to shoot in San Francisco for months on end and to India for a year, working in Varanasi. In both locales he felt the weight of entrenched poverty. In San Francisco he followed roaming groups of hippies as they hung out in parks and squatted in decaying apartments. He was

fascinated by the squalor of their sleeping arrangements and their spare existence on the streets. In India he fixated on the sight of distant children framed by oversized, indifferent cityscapes. He started making more photos of unoccupied urban scenes. In the late 1960s, in a move that he pursued until his death in 1989, Gedney began shooting night scenes. In both San Francisco and India, he photographed at night, when the streets were either emptied of people and the architectural forms of the city became stark, or when the streets were actually filled with people sleeping anywhere they could. He shot in Knoxville, Detroit, South Dakota, and New York at night between 1966 and 1975. His aim was to make images that combined several ideas about the meaning of cities at night. He was fascinated by the repetition of patterns in urban streets and the “dehumanization” of streets through architectural and governmental policies. He wanted to pursue the chance encounters that seemed everywhere in the city—the “relations of beings unaware of their relationship.” Finally, he was fascinated by the street as a place of danger and crime. Night amplified the sense of abandonment that he thought of as an American syndrome; when objects and places turned old, they were dropped and forgotten. He found all of these things across the country when the streets turned quiet after sunset. But would they be in Bethlehem?<sup>8</sup>

### Bethlehem, 1975

Gedney toured Bethlehem over the last two days of September 1975, five months after Evans died at the age of seventy-one. It would be months before he returned to the eastern United States, and Bethlehem was the place he started. Over the course of two afternoons and one late night, Gedney shot in the streets, as if updating Evans’s project after a forty-year hiatus. Most of his time was spent in South Bethlehem, the traditional immigrant and working-class section of the city whose residents lived close to the massive steel works on the Lehigh River. These were the streets that the *Bethlehem Bulletin* described as “right slab up against the belching smokepots of the steel company.” The South Side centered on two streets that historically served as the retail and residential hubs on that side of the river. Third Street, one block from the mill complex, was the once-vibrant shopping corridor. Fourth Street, two blocks from Bethlehem Steel, was lined with rowhouses, churches, schools, and ethnic social clubs. The southwestern portion of the



South Side housed the campus of Lehigh University, an unlikely neighbor for this neglected residential community. Gedney stayed at the YMCA across the river in the central business section of Bethlehem and ventured forth on foot by day and by car at night. The city was not particularly welcoming to visitors, at least not those who visited in late September. Since the 1950s the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce had viewed the colonial history of the city as its main tourist draw. The chamber's tourism and convention committee dreamed in 1958 of competing with Williamsburg, Virginia, by taking advantage of the "Christmas City" reputation that they had cultivated since the 1930s. Everything marketable was north of the river. A city pitched as a yuletide family destination was not in the business of impressing South Side strollers.<sup>9</sup>

Three thousand people had left the South Side in the decade before, a number that comprised almost all of Bethlehem's population slump in the sixties. The remaining population of the South Side skewed older than the rest of the city, and its median household income was three-quarters of the local standard. It was also the part of town in which most Spanish-speaking residents lived, a factor that some critics used to explain the city's lack of investment south of the river. The mid-century steel economy had established a strong Spanish-speaking foundation in the Lehigh Valley. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation had sought workers in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean for the purposes of breaking strikes and saving on labor costs. The importation of workers caught on early, with several hundred Mexican workers arriving in designated train cars during the 1920s. Puerto Rican immigrants came in the 1940s and 1950s, and by the 1960s the South Side was recognized as the Hispanic section of town. The Bethlehem Human Relations Commission reported in 1970 that 7,400 local residents had Spanish as their first language and, of those, 6,200 were Puerto Ricans. By 1975 officials estimated that as many as 10,000 Puerto Ricans were in Bethlehem, most of them on the South Side. Several South Side churches that had once served European immigrants now attracted Hispanic churchgoers. The local press reported on ethnic tension as a fact of life in the Valley. Allentown's *Morning Call* connected the chilly relationship between the South Side and the city council to an "ill-concealed animosity towards South Bethlehem's new foreigners—the blacks and Puerto Ricans." Council members tended to see the northern half of Bethlehem as the future and the southern half mired in a strange mix of the past and the alien.<sup>10</sup>

The city around which Gedney shadowed Evans was arguably in worse shape than it had been in the 1930s. Bethlehem followed national postwar trends, with the population increasing modestly (from 58,000 to 72,000 people) and incomes generally rising over the decades. Steelworkers in Bethlehem were unionized after 1941. But the rising tide fell away in the first half of the seventies. Suburban growth had ringed the city with middle-class neighborhoods that worried Gedney a little as he drove into town. As he passed “those endless lookalike ranch houses and ubiquitous shopping centers,” he thought that there might not be anything worth seeing. The suburbs drained the city center of some of its retail and civic vitality, but the look and feel of South Bethlehem, with its 15,000 residents, encouraged him. In his journal Gedney described the experience of moving around the steel town. “The first thing you notice,” he wrote, “is there are no . . . bars covering the store windows. In New York City almost every store is barred on closing.” The observation says more about property crime in New York than about the wonders of Bethlehem, but Gedney interpreted it as a type of civility that could still be found in lower-tier industrial centers. Gedney continued, “The streets in Bethlehem are clean, the children look healthy, the homes are well kept.” Nine-tenths of the South Side had been built before 1940, yet the visual scene struck Gedney as fresh. He had seen enough dilapidation around the world, he thought, to know a real community when he saw one. Bethlehem might be a little rough around the edges, but it was not New York City, Varansi, or Grassy Branch Hollow, Kentucky.<sup>11</sup>

His positive appraisal should be seen in the context of this previous work and as the aesthetic observations of a man passing through town; they did quite not correspond to the local reality. In the week before Gedney’s visit, the Environmental Protection Agency awarded the Lehigh Valley trio of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton with an “adequate” quality of life rating. That dismal rating spoke to the valley’s economic slump, the lack of cooperation between various governmental bodies, and rampant pollution. Unemployment had tripled in the Lehigh Valley over the past several years. Between late 1973 and late 1975, the unemployment rate jumped from 2.5 to 7.5 percent, representing an additional 16,000 people without work. Two months before Gedney arrived, the city recorded its highest unemployment rate in fifteen years. Layoffs at Bethlehem Steel, Mack Trucks, Western Electric, and other manufacturers led the *Globe-Times* to observe, “By any standards the economic picture for the Lehigh Valley in 1975 was not a rosy

one.” The strain of unemployment added to an inflation rate of 7 percent to produce a national problem of stagflation that had a particular meaning for South Bethlehem. As economists and media commentators talked about the uptick in the “misery index” from coast to coast, local store owners who were hanging on by a thread saw their last chance at survival slip away.<sup>12</sup>

Economically speaking, the downtown and South Side sections were in trouble. Local newspapers provided regular rolls of stores closing throughout 1974 and 1975, some of them moving to the shopping malls that Gedney had passed in the suburbs, but most simply going out of business. The city was in a transition that saw many small, neighborhood stores close when their long-time owners retired and their children or grandchildren saw no point in pursuing dwindling profits. Jewelers, grocers, drugstore owners, and furniture dealers all shuttered their windows. When those businesses left the South Side, there were no new stores to step into the void. Instead, the shops sat vacant, often after the Bethlehem Steel Corporation had purchased them with an eye toward razing whole blocks and adding new employee parking spaces. This was the heart of what the *Morning Call* termed the “South Side Slide.”<sup>13</sup>

If Bethlehem appeared to be quite stable to Gedney in the 1970s, so, too, did Bethlehem Steel—if viewed from afar. Like other American steel manufacturers, Bethlehem Steel enjoyed great profits after the Second World War. Its executives were some of the highest paid in the nation. A local newspaper editor observed that the sixties were renaissance years for the city—years of “modernization, restoration, and reinvigoration,” with steel representatives intimately involved in local government. Yet there were also signs that the company was not nimble enough. Company leadership ignored researchers’ advice to implement efficient continuous casting processes in the 1960s, giving an advantage to Japanese steel makers. Imported steel and production by so-called mini-mills began to eat away at Bethlehem Steel’s market base, while rising labor and pollution control costs staggered the firm. Although it was not until 1977 that Bethlehem Steel recorded its first net annual loss in half a century, by 1975 the company was stumbling. It stood at what the historian Kenneth Warren called the threshold between an age of growth and one of contraction. There were just under 15,000 workers remaining in the Bethlehem plants in 1975, but that number continued to fall until the very end. On the day after Gedney left town, the Bethlehem Steel Corporation announced that it would close four plants in its fabricated steel division, starting a contraction that amplified over the next decade. Some of the

250 workers who lost their jobs in steel in early 1976 were transferred to other divisions, but the valley's unemployment rolls certainly grew, as they had been for several years. Unions could no longer outrun inflation, and labor's bargaining power slipped as a result.<sup>14</sup>

This was the city that Gedney photographed in 1975, if not quite the one that Evans had in 1935. It is not clear what Gedney was working toward in Bethlehem, but perhaps he thought of the town as a subject for an ongoing series that he called "Details of American Life." By 1975 he sought images of American life without people in the frame. His 1975 trip was funded by a National Endowment for the Arts grant. He described the project as a "series of pictures, close-ups of objects, buildings, furniture, etc., non human views that together will form a portrait of our culture." He shot these "non human" views in Bethlehem, images mostly without people in them, where the forms of architecture and landscape conveyed meanings. Yet he was only half-concerned with American culture when he toured the town; this was also an engagement with Evans through the *medium* of Bethlehem.<sup>15</sup>

### Logical Places

With a Chamber of Commerce map and his unfocused camera, Gedney left the YMCA and headed south around 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon. The first photograph to study here is an early shot from his afternoon walk, when he reached the South Side and walked along an alley paralleling Third Street. As he climbed south on the streets leading away from the river, Gedney kept looking back over his shoulder to the steel mill. When he reached the corner of Mechanic and State streets, he photographed the view down State toward Third (see fig. 2). The image captured four rowhouses in the foreground, cars parked along the sloping street, and the mill complex in the background. In front of one of the houses, four children stood, apparently unaware of Gedney's presence. Shooting to the northeast allowed him to frame the darkness of the houses against the white sky above the steel structures. The Bethlehem Steel works, he wrote, "dominate[d] the city," in both a social and a spatial sense. As mill worker Richie Check explained his career decision as a teenager: "Very few [of us] went to college. If your parents had money, you went. If not, you worked at Bethlehem Steel." The mill hovered in the background of the image, suggesting that Gedney was looking for an "Evans effect." This was the relationship that seized Gedney during his stay



FIGURE 2: Mechanic and State Streets, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

in Bethlehem—making the viewer choose, in effect, between the lives being led in the shadow of the mill and the mill itself. Third Street, barely visible in the bottom right of the photo, had not impressed Gedney as he had walked along it. Up here, with a little height to bring more of the South Side into the frame, there were greater possibilities.<sup>16</sup>

The very ground on which Gedney stood when he took this picture was the subject of a protracted tug-of-war between development-minded parties in Bethlehem and South Side residents who considered themselves pawns. The conflict concerned the South Side '76 project, begun in 1969. The South Side '76 General Committee emerged as a joint effort of the mayor's office and the Chamber of Commerce to bring an economic base back to the neighborhoods south of the river. Gruen Associates, one of the leading planning firms in the 1960s to advocate pedestrian downtowns served by expressways and arterial roads, was contracted as the project's main consultants. The firm had been known for twenty years as, alternately, the scourge and savior of struggling American downtowns. The Austrian-born Victor Gruen first designed suburban shopping complexes that drew people away from urban retail districts and later designed city-center shopping malls that never quite met expectations. Now, that planning eye turned to the South Side of Bethlehem and its escalating problems of declining commercial investment and low property values. As Gruen put it, "The South Side should be

a socially and economically attractive sector of Bethlehem.” The fact that it had not been for at least thirty years could not be overlooked. The analysts picked up on a pervasive sense that the area’s best days were decades past.<sup>17</sup>

The General Committee was composed of several officials from Lehigh, Bethlehem Steel executives, city and county planning officials, representatives from local banks and the Chamber of Commerce, and members of the clergy and the school board. Along with Gruen’s analysts, they presented their formal plan to the city council in July 1972. The plan was audacious, to put it mildly. The General Committee called for the construction of a spur road to connect the South Side to the planned Interstate 78 two miles to the south. Although Victor Gruen wrote thoughtfully about the need to separate the “humane” from the “functional” in urban designs, this plan placed the latter directly on top of the former in sections of the South Side that were considered irredeemable. As envisioned, the project required the destruction of over 200 houses and 37 businesses that lay along the path of the spur. The scene that Gedney captured in his photo from Mechanic and State streets would be completely leveled for the new corridor. The proposal also devoted the most development funding to the intersection of New and Fourth streets; the historic business core along Third Street would be bypassed with new traffic flows. Operating under the decades-old assumption that “pedestrianism” was the heart of an urban retail district, everyone involved knew what this meant. This situation, the planners admitted, would “almost certainly speed [Third Street’s] already rapid decline and deterioration.”<sup>18</sup>

Criticism of the proposal erupted immediately. Although there was never a critical mass of dissenters to derail the city’s plans, the South Side-based *Bethlehem Bulletin* served as the voice of locals who distrusted government and considered themselves shut out of decision-making. The *Bulletin* covered every move of the South Side ‘76 committee and consistently presented the development plans as harmful to the community. There were certainly some residents who resented the Gruen vision of “continued shrinkage of the Third Street Business Area to a size commensurate with its immediate adjacent market of industrial employees.” Others saw a thinly veiled conspiracy between Lehigh and Bethlehem Steel to turn the South Side into a vast money-making venture. The engineered collapse of Third Street struck some critics as the first step toward driving low-income residents out altogether. When the city council labeled the South Side as “blighted” in an attempt to get federal redevelopment funding, residents complained that their homes and streets had been sacrificed by the city and manipulated by powerful interests. Even so, the infrastructural spending that South Side ‘76 proposed

struck the *Bulletin* crowd as a wasted effort. “Who are they kidding?” asked a Third Street business owner. “Don’t they know that there has not been a new house built on the South Side from Fourth Street to Williams Street in the past 30 years?”<sup>19</sup>

Coincidentally, the South Side ‘76 General Committee disbanded approximately five hours after Gedney took this first photograph. That evening, the committee met one block west of where he stood, in the Hungarian Catholic Club. After speeches and a buffet dinner, the dozens assembled ended their official advocacy for the spur road. Despite the effort, federal money was simply not attainable for the project; without that aid, the city could never hope to redesign the South Side. Reese Jones, the former president of South Side ‘76, declared, “The North Side may have the intellect, but the South Side has all the hormones. It has spirit and pride.” That pride turned into celebration when the ambitious plans were scrapped. Construction of I-78 began nine years later, but the efficient spur road to connect the South Side never happened.<sup>20</sup>

As he moved one block to the east, Gedney continued to turn back toward the mill and photograph. The next image captured an indistinct figure in the parking lot of a banquet hall on Hall and Evans streets (see fig. 3). In the back Bethlehem Steel’s blast furnaces popped up again. An image like this was pure experimentation. Gedney was testing the depths of the compositions that could be made from this height. He had not yet gotten to the higher



FIGURE 3: Hall and Evans Streets, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

ground that he would reach next, and he was figuring out what could be done from this alley between Third and Fourth streets. His walk illustrates geographer David Crouch's observation that "in tourism it is *through* rather than 'in front of' spaces that we experience where we are." He was not looking for an inert scene as much as *feeling* his way. The sensation of being embedded in a site plays a significant role in tourists' sense of place. The constant sight of the steel works, its seeming gravitational pull on the town's residents, epitomized how Gedney translated Evans. He might have been interested in city surfaces, but it took a good deal of engagement with the thickness and depths of cities before he could produce memorable "non human images" within them.<sup>21</sup>

Gedney's feel of a steel town like Bethlehem shared an attraction to "backstage" areas with the waves of fringe tourists that followed him. Fringe (or alternative) tourism depends on a conscious rejection of the traditional trappings of tourism, like commercial packaging and staged experiences. Travelers who consider themselves distinct from mainstream tourists deliberately seek out those zones that are not intended for display. To the fringe tourist, these zones feel more authentic and thus offer insights into a locale that could not be attained through prescribed channels. Fringe tourism is more than the yearning to get off the beaten path—it is a project to subvert the beaten path through countermessages. Among the varieties of fringe tourist sites, including disaster sites, places of mass death, and derelict buildings or towns, the industrial zones of cities offer perhaps the most accessible experience of life on the margins. Gedney spent so much time in alleys because he believed that those were the spots where one could see the nation anew.<sup>22</sup>

The afternoon session might have been a warm-up for the night shoot that he planned for the early hours of the following morning. In that sense, this portion of Gedney's time spent in South Bethlehem was what the sociologist Allison Hui calls "travel-in-anticipation." Hui uses the term to designate the type of deliberate, goal-oriented movement in which ancillary sights or attractions are mere distractions from the goal. In the hands of another photographer, this image would have focused on the person in the foreground. Gedney had other aims in mind, so it decentered and de-emphasized him or her. His out-of-focus camera only heightened the sense that he was not very interested in the parking lot figure, who just happened to be in the way. Gedney was concerned with the dehumanization of the streets, yet he was an active partner in the process. He had pressing matters two blocks to the south.<sup>23</sup>



After shooting several more images on Mechanic Street, the big moment had arrived. As Gedney told the tale, by moving further south, crossing Fourth Street, and climbing a low wall into a cemetery, he found himself standing—by chance—in the spot that brought him full circle with his idol. He scribbled in his shooting journal, “St. Michaels Cemetery where Walker Evans shot . . . at E. 4<sup>th</sup> St and Hill St. Came upon it accidentally, it is the logical place to take a picture from.” The old Roman Catholic cemetery had been maintained by the Holy Infancy Church on Fourth Street since 1961. Without funding or personnel to do much with the sprawling site, the church staff weeded only in the section of the cemetery closest to the street. The rest, as it stretched up the severe slope of South Mountain, became covered in a tangle of underbrush and dumped trash. Local youths used the cemetery’s upper sections as a playground, and vandals knocked over or sprayed paint on gravestones several times a year in the 1970s. High school students hired by the parish priest cut any grass that they could reach and bricked up a few mausoleums that had been broken into, but the effort could not hold back the sense that nature was reclaiming the cemetery. For South Side residents and the relatives of people interred there, the state of the cemetery in 1975 was a sign of “official indifference” for that section of town. A Fourth Street resident complained to the *Globe-Times* that she and her family were afraid to walk past or through the cemetery, for fear of being pelted by apple-wielding teens who had taken over. Gedney managed to get just high enough in St. Michael’s to reach Evans’s perch.<sup>24</sup>

The next morning, as he transcribed his field notes in the style of an anthropologist, Gedney provided full details of his impression:

In wandering in South Bethlehem . . . I came upon an unkempt cemetery overlooking a sloping hill with rows of working class houses and in the background the stacks of the steel mill. Tall crosses are outlined against this social background. It was the most logical place I had found in walking around for three hours, from which to photograph. I start to photograph and suddenly it dawns on me that it’s been done before. Walker Evans photographed here in the . . . Thirtys and the photograph is in *American Photographs*. He got there first.<sup>25</sup>

This idea of Walker Evans getting there first—commanding the heights of South Bethlehem—speaks volumes about Gedney’s experience of the town. He constructed the narrative to make it clear to himself that he recognized

the value of the site independently. He *knew* that this was the place from which to photograph South Bethlehem, even before he recognized it as a famous view. A professional photographer who had taken extensive notes about Evans's choices "suddenly" found himself replicating those choices. Gedney was proving something to himself.

The photos he took from St. Michael's Cemetery are not artistically noteworthy, apart from the connection to the image from 1935. One shot came closest to approximating Evans's, but Gedney was not standing high enough to replicate his counterpart's layering effect (see fig. 4). In this image, Gedney repeated his look to the northwest, catching some of the mill structures in the frame behind the rowhouses and gravestones. All of the elements were there, but the composition was merely a nod toward Evans—it was less than the sum of its parts. Gedney included the side of the Hungarian Lutheran Church in the photo, and the effect was to make the viewer place him or herself in the cemetery with the photographer. Lacking this context, Evans's image was *of* Bethlehem; with this context, Gedney's image was *within* Bethlehem.

If this was the logical place to take a picture, there were two reasons why it made such sense. First, a technical reason: this spot offered the type of formal composition that Gedney believed captured the essence of Bethlehem—what he described as "tall crosses . . . outlined against [a] social background." When he stated that Evans had been there first, he acknowledged that the terrain of Bethlehem had been inscribed by what sociologist Mike Crang



FIGURE 4: St. Michael's Cemetery, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

would call Evans's "picturing practices." Evans mapped the route, as it were, and a fellow professional like Gedney was compelled to follow. The scene from the cemetery essentially became an unofficial photo opportunity. It gave the photographer enough height to capture the dominating presence of the mill as it stood within the South Side, as opposed to, say, shooting it from across the river to the north. The mill was only useful for the type of photography that Evans and Gedney attempted if its relationship to the human side of Bethlehem could be depicted. What Gedney described as a "social background" was this sense of place—the entrenched nature of the steel works in the community.<sup>26</sup>

His experiences in Kentucky and India were still on his mind in Bethlehem. He was preoccupied with the materiality of daily routines, "the little, the messy, and the jerry-rigged." Making many exposures of the ephemera of poverty, Gedney had documented the look of places shaped by distinctive ideas about people, value, and community. He dramatized the ordinary, fascinated by the *stuff* piled up and littered around sites. Before he left for Bethlehem, he wrote in his notebook a quote from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: "I don't like work, no man does—but I like what is in work—the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know." Gedney wanted his "Details of American Life" series to show people's reality without showing the people. "Non human" images were meant to reveal the complexity of people's experiences, as if the experiences could stand on their own. The relationships between buildings and objects did the work. Still, there was a lingering suspicion in Gedney's images that much would remain unknown.<sup>27</sup>

A second shot from the cemetery looked west toward the busier end of Fourth Street (see fig. 5). Gedney stood in the shade of St. Michael's trees and used the long row of houses to follow the course of the street into the distance. Seven small American flags poked out of the unkempt grass in the foreground, and the bright sky filled the top third of the frame. This photograph, in particular, suffered from the lack of focus in Gedney's camera. For the crispness and detail of Evans's work, it substituted a haziness that made the scene utterly generic. A viewer can take something from this image, though, by focusing on the disorder portrayed. This photograph shares the cluttered look of the other cemetery shot, and it was a clutter that delighted Gedney. By choosing not to capture people in his "detail" images, he presented their presence in the material they had left behind. People had placed the flags; people had parked the cars; people had swept the porches; and



FIGURE 5: Fourth Street, Bethlehem, 1975. William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

people had animated the town through the years. Bethlehem was still alive, if not kicking.

In the late afternoon, Gedney took a break to recuperate, refocus his Leica, and prepare for his night session. When he returned to the streets after midnight to shoot for three more hours, he presented the steel works as a spectacle, glowing in the night behind the houses of South Bethlehem. He returned to Mechanic Street and shot the view to the north down Hill Street (see fig. 6). He shot to portray the visceral presence of the mill in the city, and the darkness helped. The glow in the distance made the mill's domination of the city palpable. In the middle-ground of the image, a corner house with a steeple roof drew Gedney's attention as the most distinct building on the block. His focus on the house benefited indirectly from a recent, appalling incident on the South Side. The city council had improved street and alley lighting in the wake of a grisly crime that had occurred five months earlier. In late April, an intruder had bludgeoned and strangled seventy-eight-year-old Katherine Kerchmar in her home on Fourth Street, several hundred feet from where Gedney took this photo.<sup>28</sup>

The murder stirred a vocal response from South Side residents, as they demanded that the Bethlehem Police Department assign foot patrolmen and police dogs to their neighborhood. The Kerchmar murder was the most shocking example of criminal activity that seemed to be increasing in the South Side. Speaking to news reporters, Kerchmar's neighbors described their



FIGURE 6: Mechanic and Hill Streets, Bethlehem, 1975.  
William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University,  
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

homes as “fortresses” barricaded against invaders. They offered a rundown of recent events that had everyone angry and afraid: a rash of thefts from mailboxes, frequent reports of prowlers, and the attack on an elderly woman by a man who posed as a meter reader. Long gone were the days when the old-timers left their doors open; now, some residents said they would not even answer their doorbell. A nearby storeowner observed, “A lot of people here are afraid—afraid to go out in the daytime, much less at night.” Street robberies and home burglaries had been prevalent over the winter, a bump that usually did not occur until the summer months. “People are getting worse,” offered a Third Street resident somewhat cryptically. A Fourth Street barber, whose customers told him that they were too afraid to continue coming to him, exclaimed, “I’m getting surrounded by rats and bums.” A jewelry store manager a block over summed it up: “Even policemen seem to be afraid to be here at night.” Gedney, the long-time New Yorker, ventured out into the South Side night without any mention of concern for his safety. He had admitted three years earlier that his fear of being mugged stopped him from photographing his beloved Brooklyn at night. Bethlehem seemed safe by contrast.<sup>29</sup>

Once again, Gedney’s reaction was that of an outsider without local knowledge. Few residents of the South Side would have advised him to shoot at night. Bethlehem as a whole had become more crime-ridden in the years before Gedney’s arrival. The local crime rate more than doubled between 1970 and 1975. The city’s police commissioner could maintain as

late as the summer of 1973 that the most pressing crimes committed locally were “small, annoying burglaries,” but 1974 changed that. Violent crimes increased 60 percent that summer, and residents reported 108 burglaries that July alone. Police Commissioner Robert Galle noted that locals were “desperate for money,” and he pointed to a massive wave of thefts from parking meters as an illustration of that desperation. He also referred to national trends to help explain 1974’s 38 percent increase in all crimes and 41 percent increase in property crimes. Crime rates were increasing across the country, with the national murder rate increasing 30 percent between 1970 and 1974 and the robbery rate increasing 26 percent in the same period. Many law enforcement officials, like Galle, cited economic pressures as the main motivator. The crime rate in Bethlehem was 13 percent higher in 1975 than the year before, and, worryingly, the violent crime rate was up 66 percent. “People are out of work,” Galle explained, “and are simply turning to robbery to get money. They are just going out taking it from others.”<sup>30</sup>

Less than a week after Galle’s pronouncement, Kati Kerchmar was murdered in her house on Fourth Street. Police quickly ran out of leads in the case, after questioning all the “super junkies and thieves” of the South Side. The case was never solved, and it took months for residents along Fourth Street to shake the fear and dread that the murder provoked. But it is likely that Gedney had no sense of the South Side’s recent history as he toured its streets in the early hours of September 29. There is no record of him having spoken to residents, or any evidence of research he might have conducted on the area. He agreed with the *Globe-Times* reporter who described the residential streets of the South Side as “well-kept, close-knit,” and alive with a sense of the past. Current events be damned.<sup>31</sup>

## Conclusion

After waking up late the next day for a few last shots, Gedney drove west across Pennsylvania to Cleveland. By the end of October, he had set himself up for an extended stay in San Francisco. In November Gedney took notes on a *Rolling Stone* magazine piece about Walker Evans. The writer argued that Evans conveyed “a subtle . . . insistence on the ordinary.” Evans’s work, the reviewer continued, “invites contemplation, and contemplation induces revelation. Blink and it all seems ordinary again.” Evans excelled at a back-and-forth that made his pictures transcend the mundane while reminding the viewer that the scenes depicted were still ordinary. The Bethlehem that

Gedney depicted on film never quite moved beyond the ordinary, but the Bethlehem he experienced while making his images was special to him and seemingly prepared him for months of shooting on the West Coast. His brief stop in Bethlehem was as close to playing the tourist as he got in a thirty-year career that typically involved incremental microstudies of small locales. He breezed through Bethlehem, looking for the inner workings of the Evans legend. Shortly after jotting down his notes from *Rolling Stone*, Gedney shot roll after roll of pictures of Hollywood film sets, this time in perfect focus. His contact sheets display the artist's delight in finding the raw materials of cinematic dreams. His less spectacular negatives from Bethlehem conveyed an equal amount of appreciation. As he tried to produce meaningful images of the city, Gedney believed that South Side scenes still conjured up the moods he felt when he studied that famous shot by Evans. Fourth Street, Mechanic Street, and St. Michael's Cemetery lived on film as they did not in reality. He reworked their meanings in a way that residents might not have recognized.<sup>32</sup>

We can learn something about modern relationships with the past if we consider how Gedney's trip resembles recent tourist approaches to mills, derelict neighborhoods, and industrial ruins. Detroit might be the most prominent example of a new style of urban touring, but dozens of cities and towns in the Rust Belt have attracted fringe tourists who are fascinated by the sights and moods of decay. The theme that they share with Gedney is an attraction to everyday life on the margins, with specific pasts disconnected from specific sites. Gedney was not interested in the specifics of culture or history in Bethlehem; he was content to appreciate the city's modest houses, weedy lawns, and cramped streets. Everything spoke to the "pastness" of the place, especially the mill in the distance. Fringe tourists also look for spectacles that they can feel, without requiring the deep understanding of contexts that historians, sociologists, and geographers encourage. The headings "social history," "labor history," and "local history" mean little when applied to this type of interaction with places. There are no lessons to be learned, at least none that move beyond generic narratives of waste, abandonment, and the plight of the underdog.<sup>33</sup>

That is not to say that Gedney was aloof in Bethlehem. If he represents a model of tourism, it is not a model of passivity. It represents the type of touristic engagement that attempts a sensual immersion in an imagined scene. He imagined that scene through an old photograph. And he imagined himself *in the scene*, carrying on a practice that Evans had started. This

resembles the self-reflexive, exploratory type of rust-belt tourism that relies on the media of digital photography, video, and online commentary. Tourists looking for something to see (and something to feel) turn to others who have toured the backstage areas of industrial cities, and the impulse is to explore the scenery from the vantage point of the stagehands. They want to see behind the curtain.<sup>34</sup>

Evans's work generated an elusive sense of pastness for Gedney. For some, that mood can be found in the twenty-first century in abandoned hospitals or pockmarked brownfields. For others, it might be a sense of the industrial past turned into a stunning backdrop, as at the SteelStacks performing arts stage that has occupied part of the old Bethlehem Steel grounds since 2011. Commentators (historians among them) often present these engagements with places as symbolic violence committed upon insiders by outsiders but, seen from the perspective of visitors like Gedney, they become a sincere attempt to experience something authentic. When Evans served as the photo editor of *Fortune* magazine in the 1960s, he encouraged readers to seek out real cities instead of imaginary ones when they looked at old photos. "It is better to renounce sentimentality and nostalgia," he wrote, "that blurred vision which destroys the actuality of the past. Good old times is a cliché for the infirm mind." Gedney's photos from Bethlehem help us see that the actuality of the urban past is as much a fantasy as the Historic Moravian District or the Christmas City. Logical places to take pictures might benefit from information kiosks or historical markers, but even without these devices, the physical spaces of a steel town like Bethlehem can create a curious, unfixed connection to the past. This mood is a more significant part of heritage tourism than we are likely to recognize when we take customary approaches to local histories and their enthusiasts. People play with the past at places like St. Michael's, and the relentless circulation of imagery makes it possible.<sup>35</sup>

## NOTES

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1. Projects notebooks, William Gedney Photographs and Writings, Duke University David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Durham, NC (hereafter Gedney Collection).



2. Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940–1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 203; Allison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 2–12. Versions of the declension model appear in numerous studies as a reference to a civic vitality lost over the course of the twentieth century. David Nasaw observes that American cities “no longer sparkle as they once did.” Judith Modell describes residents of a de-industrialized town as relying on “memories of the good old days and the self-conscious contrasts between then and now.” Robert Fogelson declares, “nowhere . . . is downtown today as immense, as imposing, and as awesome” as city-dwellers from 1900 would have dreamed. See David Nasaw, *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 256; Judith Modell, *A Town Without Steel: Envisioning Homestead* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), 319; and Robert Fogelson, *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880–1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 397.
3. Edward Steichen, quoted in Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 256; Caroline F. Ware, ed., *The Cultural Approach to History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 228–30; Belinda Rathbone, *Walker Evans: A Biography* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2000), 109.
4. Cornelius Holtorf, “On Pastness: A Reconsideration of Materiality in Archaeological Object Authenticity,” *Anthropological Quarterly* 86 (Spring 2013): 430, 437; Rathbone, *Walker Evans*, 61, 84, 111.
5. Leslie Baier, “Visions of Fascination and Despair: The Relationship between Walker Evans and Robert Frank,” *Art Journal* 41 (Spring 1981): 56, 59.
6. Gedney memo book, Gedney Collection. In March 1969 Gedney attended a dinner honoring the ninety-year-old Edward Steichen on his birthday. His interest in documentary photography from the Depression era was strong, but he rejected the “self-glorification” as “disgusting.”
7. Guggenheim application, box 2, Gedney Collection.
8. Gedney notebook, 1967–69, Gedney Collection.
9. *Bethlehem Bulletin*, September 13, 1973; *Allentown Call-Chronicle*, March 23, 1958.
10. *Allentown Morning Call*: September 13, 1971, October 9, 1975, March 22, 1976, and December 4, 1988; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, October 2, 1970, September 3, 1971, and February 26, 1974. The Holy Infancy Church on Fourth Street was “Spanish-oriented” by 1973 and St. Mark’s Lutheran Church had become a Spanish Evangelical church by 1974.
11. *Allentown Morning Call*, March 22, 1976; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, January 27, 1971.
12. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, February 27, 1976; unemployment figures taken from *Globe-Times* reports on December 27, 1973, April 24, 1975, and December 22, 1975; Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010), 222.
13. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 22, 1975, April 10, 1974, and July 21, 1975; *Morning Call*, March 22, 1976.
14. Eugene Grace, quoted in John Strohmeier, *Crisis in Bethlehem: Big Steel’s Struggle to Survive* (Bethesda, MD: Adler and Adler, 1986), 28, 51; Kenneth Warren, *Bethlehem Steel: Builder and Arsenal of America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008), 193; *Allentown Call-Chronicle*, February 23, 1975; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, October 1, 1975; Lance E. Metz, “A Short History of

- the Bethlehem Steel Corporation," in *Bethlehem Steel*, ed. Andrew Garn (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 42; Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*, 72.
15. Projects notebooks, Gedney Collection.
16. Richie Check interview, Lehigh University Digital Library, [http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/cdm4/beyond\\_viewer.php?DMTHUMB=1&searchworks=cat10&ptr=020791](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/cdm4/beyond_viewer.php?DMTHUMB=1&searchworks=cat10&ptr=020791) (accessed June 2014). The time sequence of Gedney's shots was determined by the numbered negatives and brief annotations on the contact sheets. All contact sheets can be viewed at Duke University Libraries' Digital Collection, <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/gedney/?Subject=bethlehem> (last accessed June 2014).
17. Michael Cheyne, "No better way? The Kalamazoo Mall and the Legacy of Pedestrian Malls," *Michigan Historical Review* 36 (Spring 2010): 103–28; Gruen Associates, *South Side '76 Plan*, Lehigh University Digital Library, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/beyondsteel/> (accessed May 2014).
18. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 19, 1973, and October 1, 1975; David R. Hill, "Sustainability, Victor Gruen, and the Cellular Metropolis," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 58 (Summer 1992): 322; Isenberg, *Downtown America*, 84; Gruen Associates, *South Side '76 Plan*.
19. *Bethlehem Bulletin*, September 24, 1970, and September 13 and 28, 1973; *South Side '76 Plan*.
20. *Morning Call*, October 1, 1975.
21. David Crouch, "Surrounded by Place: Embodied Encounters," in *Tourism: Between Place and Performance*, ed. Simon Coleman and Mike Crang (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 212.
22. On fringe tourism, see Tim Edensor, "Performing Tourism, Staging Tourism: (Re)producing Tourist Space and Practice," *Tourist Studies* 1 (2001): 74; Peter Varley, "Confecting Adventure and Playing with Meaning: The Adventure Commodification Continuum," *Journal of Sport and Tourism* 11 (2006): 173–94; and Erik Cohen, *Contemporary Tourism: Diversity and Change* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2004), 101–14. See also the related Urban Exploration guides: L. B. Deyo and David "Lefty" Leibowitz, *Invisible Frontier: Exploring the Tunnels, Ruins, and Rooftops of Hidden New York* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003), and Ninjalicious, *Access All Areas: A User's Guide to the Art of Urban Exploration* (Toronto: Infilpress, 2005).
23. Allison Hui, "Moving with Practices: The Discontinuous, Rhythmic, and Material Mobilities of Leisure," *Social and Cultural Geography* 14 (December 2013): 896.
24. *Allentown Morning Call*, November 15, 1992; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 23, 1973, and December 4, 1975.
25. Gedney notebooks, Gedney Collection.
26. Mike Crang, "Picturing Practices: Research through the Tourist Gaze," *Progress in Human Geography* 21 (June 1997): 359–73. Those picturing practices forged by Evans are still alive and well in St. Michaels Cemetery. In the age of ubiquitous cameras and photo-sharing, Evans's prospect gets regularly updated in travel blogs, photography blogs, and news reports. See, for example, <https://franktsmith.wordpress.com/tag/cemetery/>; <http://bethlehem.patch.com/groups/police-and-fire/p/graves-vandalized-in-south-bethlehem-cemetery>; and <http://daylightbooks.org/blog/2010/12/16/897> (all accessed June 2014).
27. Nigel Thrift, "Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect," *Geografiska Annaler* B-86 (March 2004): 75.
28. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, April 27, 1976.

29. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, April 28 and 29, and May 7, 1975; *Allentown Morning Call*, March 22, 1976; October 23, 1972 entry, Gedney Rollbook, Gedney Collection.
30. Teaford, *Rough Road to Renaissance*, 201; *Allentown Morning Call*, August 2, 1973, February 8, 1975, and January 7, 1976; *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, September 6, 1974, and April 22, 1975.
31. *Bethlehem Globe-Times*, April 29, 1975, and April 27, 1976.
32. Gedney notebooks, Gedney Collection.
33. For commentary on rust-belt tourism and its reliance on authenticity, see the geographer Jim Russell's blog at <http://burghdiaspora.blogspot.com/> and Alana Semuels, "Detroit's Abandoned Buildings Draw Tourists Instead of Developers," *Los Angeles Times*, December 25, 2013, <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/dec/25/nation/la-na-detroit-ruin-tours-20131226> (both accessed June 2014).
34. For many examples of tourists' photographic souvenirs from trips to fringe sites, see <http://www.reddit.com/r/urbanexploration/> (accessed June 2014).
35. Holtorf, "On Pastness," 431; Walker Evans, "When 'Downtown' Was a Beautiful Mess," *Fortune* (January 1962): 101; Stefan Roesch, *The Experiences of Film Location Tourists* (Bristol: Channel View, 2009), 73, 202.